

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-13 EUR-12 SAM-01 SAB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7270

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USUN NEW YORK 309

DIA

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2328

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY, PLO

SUBJECT: SANA STATEMENT ON LEBANESE CRISIS FOLLOWING ASAD'S  
MEETING WITH PLO EXCOMM

1. LEAD ARTICLE IN APRIL 16 SYRIAN PRESS IS REPORT  
BY GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY OF  
LAST NIGHT'S MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT ASAD AND PLO  
EXCOMM. ESSENTIAL PORTIONS FOLLOW.

2. QUOTE AT 1000 PM ASAD RECEIVED DELEGATION FROM  
PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE COMPOSED OF YASIR ARAFAT,  
SALAH KHALAF, NAYIF HAWATMEH, ZUHAYR MUHSEN, NIMR  
SALEH AND FARUQ QADDOUMI. DEPUTY PRIMIN AND FORMIN  
ABD AL-HALIM KHADDAM, DEP. MINDEF GENERAL NAJI JAMIL  
AND COS GEN. HIKMAT SHIHABI ATTENDED MEETING....  
BOTH SIDES EXAMINED CRISIS IN LEBANON AND DANGERS  
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INHERENT IN ITS CONTINUANCE. VIEWS DIFFERED ON

VARIOUS ASPECTS. BOTH SIDES AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING: (1) STOPPING THE FIGHTING AND ADOPTING A UNIFIED STAND AGAINST ANY PARTY WHICH UNDERTAKES TO RESUME HOSTILITIES. (2) RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN-LEBANESE SUPREME TRIPARTITE MILITARY COMMITTEE TO ACHIEVE A CEASE FIRE AND PUT IT INTO EFFECT AND SUPERVISE IT UNTIL ELECTION OF THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC WHO WILL THEN DECIDE UPON APPROPRIATE SECURITY MEASURES IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIM CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY. (3) RESISTING PARTITION IN ANY FORM AS WELL AS ANY ACTION AFFECTING UNITY OF LEBANESE PEOPLE AND LAND. (4) REJECTION OF AMERICAN PLANS AND SOLUTIONS FOR LEBANON. (5) ADHERENCE TO CONTINUATION OF THE SYRIAN INITIATIVE. (6) REJECTION OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OR INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL FORCES INTO LEBANON. (7) REJECTION OF ARABIZING THE CRISIS IN LEBANON. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT. SEVERAL ASPECTS OF FOREGOING REPORT ARE NOTEWORTHY. (A) IMPORTANCE OF PALESTINIAN DELEGATION. ARAFAT BROUGHT ALMOST ALL THE FATAH HIGH COMMAND AND ALSO HAWATMEH WITH HIM. (B) FACT THAT IT WAS NOT A JOINT STATEMENT AND THAT EXISTENCE OF DISAGREEMENTS WAS MENTIONED ("VIEWS DIFFERED ON VARIOUS ASPECTS.") (C) MOST ESSENTIAL POINTS FOR ASAD ARE FIRST, THAT PLO AND SYRIA WILL STAND TOGETHER AGAINST ANY RENEWAL OF FIGHTING. THIS WAS WEAK POINT IN SYRIAN ENCIRCLEMENT OF JUMBLAT. SECOND, THAT PLO PUBLICLY SUPPORTS CONTINUATION OF SYRIAN INITIATIVE. (D) U.S. HAS BEEN SET UP AS CONVENIENT PUNCHINGBAG. ("AMERICAN PLAN" PROBABLY REFERS BOTH TO TACTICAL APPROACH OF ESTABLISHING CANTONS AND INTRODUCING PAKISTANI, NORWEGIAN, ETC. FORCES WHICH SYRIAN PRESS AND OTHERS HAVE ATTRIBUTED RECENTLY TO AMB. BROWN AND TO LOCALLY POPULAR "STRATEGIC ANALYSIS" THAT LEBANESE CRISIS IS ZIONIST-IMPERIALIST PLOT TO PROTECT SINAI AGREEMENT AND DIVERT PALESTINIAN AND SYRIAN ENERGIES FROM CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL.) (E) "INTERNATIONALIZATION" REFERS TO PROPOSALS TO TAKE LEBANESE CRISIS TO UN AND TO INTRODUCTION OF ANY SORT OF UN FORCES INTO LEBANON. "ARABIZATION" CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESUMABLY REFERS TO EGYPTAIN IDEA OF USING AN INTER-ARAB FORCE IN LEBANON. PALESTINIAN ENDORSEMENT OF OPPOSITION TO THESE PROPOSALS CAN BE READ AS FURTHER INDIRECT SUPPORT FOR CENTRAL SYRIAN ROLE IN SETTLING CRISIS.

4. WE PRESUME THAT DEGREE TO WHICH "VIEWS DIFFERED" WILL SOON SURFACE WHETHER DIRECTLY IN A PLO STATEMENT OR MORE LIKELY, INDIRECTLY THROUGH COMMENTARIES WHICH WILL

PROBABLY START CIRCULATING RIGHT AWAY IN  
BEIRUT.  
MURPHY

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